

IS IT WORTH WHILE?

Is it worth while that we jostle a brother,
Bearing his load on the rough road of life?
Is it worth while that we jeer at each other,
In blackness of heart?—that we war to the knife?
God pity us all in our pitiful strife!

God pity us all as we jostle each other;
God pardon us all for the triumphs we feel
When a fellow goes down; poor heart-broken brother
Pierced to the heart—words are better than steel,
And mightier far for woe or for weal.

Were it not well in this brief little journey,
On over the isthmus, down into the tide,
We give him a fish instead of a serpent,
Ere folding the hands to be and abide,
For ever and aye, in dust at his side?

Look at the roses saluting each other;
Look at the herds all at peace on the plain;
Man, and man only, makes war on his brother,
And dotes in his heart on his peril and pain,
Shamed by the brutes that go down on the plain.

Is it worth while that we battle to humble
Some poor fellow traveler down into the dust?
God pity us all! Time too soon will us tumble,
All men together, like leaves in a gust;
All of us humbled down into the dust.

—Joaquin Miller.

WHICH WAS THE COWARD?

VAN ALLEN was a romanticist. Incidentally he was a private in D troop of the Forty-second Cavalry. It might be better to say that Van Allen had been a romanticist, for the word romance could hardly be applied to soldiering in the rice paddies of Luzon. To begin with, "Van Allen" was not Van Allen's name. Why he saw fit to enlist fraudulently was beyond the ken of his most intimate friends. He had no millionaire "paw-paw" to disgrace; he was not a criminal, nor a celebrity. It might have been the same love of romance that caused him to assume the responsibilities of such an aristocratic name as Van Allen.

Sad to relate, Van Allen did not feel the thrills of patriotic enthusiasm until long after the war was over and soldiering in the Philippines had degenerated into a one-sided combat against gnats, mosquitoes, dengue fever, malaria and periodical epidemics of small-pox and cholera. An occasional hike through muddy rice paddies to subdue recalcitrant, though decimated, bands of ladrones was the nearest approach to real fighting that the Forty-second Cavalry had experienced since their arrival in the islands the latter part of 1903.

Van Allen had not intended to enlist when he asked for information regarding the service from the important little recruiting sergeant who spun inviting yarns for the benefit of gullible aspirants to military honors. But after he had listened fully an hour to entrancing stories of excessive clothing allowances, large pay on foreign service, quick and easy promotion, and the indolent life of a soldier, he decided that he had at last found his niche in life, and, besides, look at the romance in the soldier's career! The next day he raised his right hand and swore faithful allegiance to Uncle Sam for three years.

He enlisted for the mounted service, and here again his romanticism came to the fore. He must be a dashing cavalier, not an unromantic "dough boy," hiking from dawn to dark with a "long tom" slung across his shoulders. He was given half a day's rations, and with a dozen other innocents was shipped to a post near the northern border of one of our New England States to acquire a taste for equestrianism. To detail the agonies of "rooky" drill in the cavalry would only arouse pity and no amusement. Van Allen knew nothing of horses when he enlisted, but before he had been a month in the service he could tell you more about the pleasure (?) of bareback riding four hours a day than is contained in any riding school epitome.

After eight months of state soldiering orders at last came which sent the Forty-Second to the islands, and there was great rejoicing in D troop, but after two months, packed like biscuits in the hold of an army transport, subsisting on steamed food, the outlook did not seem so cheerful and many were the prayers that the "chow," at least, would improve when the outfit reached station.

Manila was a welcome sight to all below decks, and the twenty mile hike into the province of Rizal was cheerfully borne, despite the fact that a cavalryman hates nothing so much as a long march afoot.

Bong-Bong was the station for C and D troops, and as unpromising a barrio as could be found in all Luzon. The cholera had just been conquered, after ravaging the entire province and the little cemetery behind the post hospital gave mute testimony that the command previously stationed in Bong-Bong had not escaped scathless from that terrible plague. During the rainy seasons provisions sometimes got to Bong-Bong

from Manila every ten days, and often failed to. You couldn't take a car into civilization every evening and must needs make your fellow soldiers your amusement and trust in the Lord and the inefficient mail system for newspapers and letters from home.

Van Allen viewed the situation with disgust, and wished he was back in Boston clerking in the grocery business he had deserted to become a soldier of fortune (?). He vaguely wished he had not been so romantic, for somehow he couldn't find any romance lying around loose in the nipa huts inhabited by the Tagalogs.

He longed for real battles and scenes of bravery, and would lie awake nights planning his own actions should an outbreak ever occur. Heroic dreams they were, for Van Allen was a builder of

could suffer, and Van Allen couldn't believe that the cavalry charger had degenerated into a pack mule.

So Van Allen smoked Filipino cigarillos, and wished he was back in God's country pulling a hand truck on some wharf on Atlantic avenue. He managed to get into a squad sent out to quell a wandering band of ladrones whose worst crime had been stealing a little rice from the natives. He pictured the glowing deeds of heroism he would perform when they "met up" with the "enemy." After two days of endless hiking in the mud and two nights spent in a fruitless endeavor to sleep on the bare ground, under a dog tent, a lodestone for every kind of crawling thing the Philippines produce; after finding seven half starved ladrones, who surrendered without a shot, he returned to Bong-Bong and spent a fortnight in the post hospital getting well from an attack of dengue fever, complicated with a disease that might be categorized as "shattered romance." When he got out and around to his regular duties again he decided that the little recruiting sergeant and he were going to have a brief talk if ever he got back to Boston alive.

Then one day came the rumor that back in the province the natives were forming for an attack. At first the reports of native spies had been disregarded, and any intimation of insurrection had been sneered into silence at division headquarters, but the reports continued to come in from various sources until orders were finally issued to investigate. Van Allen's troop commander was ordered to send a squad of men out into the suspected district to find the truth of the reports in circulation. Then Van Allen knew that at last his chance had arrived. He secured permission to form one of the squad of eight men detailed on this duty.

After eight hours of hard marching the squad rode into the barrio of San Estanislao, reported to be the headquarters of the projected uprising. At the first glance the barrio appeared quiet and orderly as any Filipino village, and the men were inclined to think that they had come on a fool's errand. But there were a great many men around the streets for so small a place, and all the next day they poured into the barrio, many of them evidently from the neighboring hills.

All the natives appeared friendly

Your name the last word that my lips did part.

Farewell." And the next day it came. The squad was small, the insurgents many and the retreat toward Bong-Bong somewhat resembled a rout. Orderlies were sent ahead for re-enforcements, but as most of the horses had been carefully killed during the first attack, progress was slow. Many were walking, and the few horses remaining carried double burdens. Van Allen had the saddle of one of these horses, and Sergeant Brown rode behind with one arm bound up, cursing softly and steadily.

A man riding beside Van Allen turned and gazed at him with wide, staring eyes, and then smiled wanly and rolled off into the mud. His fellow rider dismounted and threw him across the pommel heedless of the blood which dyed his khaki pants a deep crimson. Blood had been too common a thing that day to cause remark or attention.

"Is he dead?" Van Allen gasped.

"How the h— do I know," was the reply. "I'm no medic." After the first fury of the attack the little party had numbered but nine men and five horses, and of these two men were now dead, and the rest, with the exception of Van Allen, had wounds, painful, if not dangerous. Brown had only a flesh wound through his left arm. Although Van Allen was badly frightened his romantic notions buoyed him up, and he essayed to joke with Brown, as all regulars are supposed to do when they are in great danger.

"Those niggers don't seem to like to have us leave in such an unceremonious manner," he said, giggling foolishly.

Brown looked at him contemptuously. "You see that and that and that?" he said, pointing to the bodies of the two dead soldiers, and the other whose life was fast ebbing out.

Van Allen nodded.

"Well, stow your chatter or I'll knock you off this caballo. This is no time for pleasantries." Van Allen subsided. Lieutenant Haight came riding up to Brown and said:

"Sergeant, these niggers have got to be stopped for at least twenty minutes. How can it be done?" Brown shook his head, but after a moment's thought answered: "Leave two men and one horse behind, and they can stand them off until the rest of the party are met by re-enforcements, sir."

"Who will stay?" asked the lieutenant.

"I will, for one," answered Brown.

"And I," cried Van Allen, all the romance to the fore.

"Very well," replied Haight, indifferently. "Of course, you men realize that the chances are slim for both of you?" They nodded. "Well, I'll leave you here. Hide behind this paddle dyke and hold out as long as you can, then make your getaway if it is possible, ride on a little farther, and lay for 'em again."

Brown saluted. Taking the horse behind the dike, he made him lie down and then coolly laid out twenty shells beside him and placed six in his piece, examined his Colt, and then settled himself to wait for the insurgents, who, now only twenty-five or thirty strong, were about four hundred yards in the rear. Van Allen followed his example in detail and Brown smiled grimly.

"Little fool," he said, "those twenty shells must all be emptied before we straddle that horse. Sabe?"

Van Allen nodded. He was past speaking. As soon as the little detachment had fled away, his romance had deserted him and now he faced stern reality in the shape of a large armed party of furious Filipinos, all desiring his death. Somehow the thought took all the fight out of him and he cowered behind the dyke, nerveless and pitiful. Suddenly Brown fired a shot and the foremost insurgente sat down suddenly with his hands at his breast.

"One," counted Brown; "he must have a stomach ache," and he looked at Van Allen. For ten seconds he cursed fervently yet softly. His daring comrade lay face downward in the mud of the rice paddy, crying and trembling in an agony of fear. His fingers were dug into the muddy weeds and his whole body seemed shrunk into half the compass of his clothes.

"Sit up," commanded Brown, in the meantime firing rapidly at the fast approaching band. No answer except the "ping, ping" of bullets and the craven sobs of Van Allen. Brown turned his back and, firing and reloading, paid no further attention to Van Allen. Suddenly he heard a rustle behind him, and glanced about in time to see Van Allen vault into the saddle and spur the horse into the road. He ceased his firing in paralyzed astonishment and watched his cowardly brother-at-arms gain the road and head toward Bong-Bong at a charging gallop. During that moment of inaction the insurgents swept by, yelling and gesticulating and firing at the rapidly retreating Van Allen. A well aimed shot brought the horse to his knees before he had traveled a hundred yards, and in a moment the entire band was upon Van Allen as he lay stunned on the hard road. Bolos dashed for a mo-

ment, and as the band swept on the blood stained thing they left in the road became the finale of Van Allen's romance. Brown they did not see. Only one man had fired at them, and as Van Allen fled on the horse they looked for no one else, and Brown, hidden behind the paddle dike, was left unmolested.

When the re-enforcements came and found the body of Van Allen in the road, and farther on found Brown, sound asleep in a bed of mud, the officers shook their heads significantly and put Brown under arrest.

Brown's report was concise: "We held them as long as we could, and then Van Allen started back to hold them up at some place farther on. He never got a hundred yards. One man on a horse could make time. Two couldn't. I stayed here and they passed on without seeing me."

In the court-martial that followed Brown was acquitted of cowardice, but was reduced to the ranks for "gross neglect of duty" and transferred to another troop in his regiment. But the stigma of that day's work had blackened a record for bravery that had been fifteen years in the building. Every one pointed him out as the man who made a recruit stand the brunt of danger while he cowered behind a shelter.

But back in Boston the blonde young lady got the picture and verse, and shed many tears over her brave soldier lover, and in a little suburban town a mother lovingly cares for a grave on which stands a handsome stone bearing the words:

To the Memory of Private—
Who died while gallantly defend-
ing the lives of his comrades.
He went cheerfully to certain
death.

"Requiescat en pace."
And on his breast rests a medal of honor. Back in the Philippines a quiet, morose man is called "coward" (out of hearing), and yet he smiles occasionally and murmurs, softly, "It's worth it, anyway." But then he has no medal of honor to live up to.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

WOOD ALCOHOL.

A Deadly Spirit Extensively Used in the World's Commerce.

Alcohol in its severest forms is a pronounced poison. The wood alcohol of commerce is the deadliest of these spirits, and yet it has been coming into such general use as a substitute for the highly taxed grain spirits that movements have been started to induce the revenue department of the United States to authorize the manufacture of a denaturalized grain alcohol free of any tax whatever. Except for the revenue tax on the grain alcohol, it could compete with the horribly poisonous wood spirits.

Potatoes will furnish alcohol in high proportionate quantities, and with the product rendered unfit for drinking purposes—as is done in Germany—the uses of the spirits in the arts exclusively should not subject it to the enormous tax placed upon the grain alcohol.

Alcohol is the base of almost countless commodities in use in almost every field of endeavor. It holds a first place as a preservative. It is an almost universal solvent for drugs and chemical substances. Germany, for example, uses 25,000,000 gallons of alcohol every year for commercial purposes, and these uses are multiplying rapidly.

Ether, celluloid, white lead, photographic papers and plates, collodion, perfumes of all kinds, transparent soaps, fulminates and smokeless powders, varnishes, inks and even the manufacture of an artificial silk are dependent upon alcohol, and in many of these combinations the substitution of the wood alcohol for the grain product may be productive of appalling calamity to the unwitting workers in these substances.

Japanese Coiffure.

In Japan a girl at the age of 9 wears her hair tied in a red scarf bound around the back of her head; the forehead is left bare, with the exception of a couple of locks, one on each side. When she is of marriageable age she combs her hair forward and makes it up into the shape of a fan or a butterfly, and at the same time decorates it with silver cord and balls of varied colors. This means everything and is fully understood by the young men of Japan. A widow who wishes for a second husband puts a tortoise-shell pin horizontally at the back of her head and twists her hair round it, while an inconsolable widow cuts her hair short and goes in for no adornments of any sort. These last are rare. By these simple means much confusion is avoided. A glance around the ball-room suffices to tell the age and status of every woman in the place.

The Real Question.

"I know, old chapple," said Dobbs, "she has her faults, and a temper, and all that; but I—I love her and can't live without her."

"Just so," calmly replied his friend; "but the question isn't that. Can you live with her?"



"WISHING HE WAS BACK IN GOD'S COUNTRY."

castles in the air, and many were the certificates of merit and "honorable mentions" in orders that he planned for himself for "distinguished gallantry." He almost prayed for a good insurrection in order that he might show his officers his true mettle. But none came and the daily grind of routine was becoming maddening. Guard every five days, old guard fatigue, duty at the stable and in the kitchen, long, idle afternoons and longer nights had nearly destroyed all the romance that Van Allen had been cherishing in his soul for twenty-five years. It wasn't a bit like the books he had read. There were no white women excepting the officers' wives, who, of course, had no word for enlisted men above a nod and smile for a favored few. Disillusionment No. 1. Then the stirring strains of martial music never thrilled Van Allen's ears, for the Forty-Second's band, such as it was, was stationed with headquarters at San Fernando. Disillusionment No. 2. And the third and worst blow to romance came with the knowledge that the days of the cavalry charge were over, and that the horses no longer went into action to the note of the bugle, but remained in the rear, while mounted men must stoop to fighting like the "dough boy," lying half buried in mud behind some friendly dyke in a rice paddy. "Horses were for transportation, not for grand standing," the G. O. had said, and that went. Still Van Allen had never had ocular proof of this, and wanted to see this degradation before he believed it. To do things like an ordinary "dough boy" was the worst disgrace a cavalryman

and peaceable, however, and the doubts that had arisen in the men's minds were gradually lulled to rest. They still kept a watchful guard on the town, but discipline was not as rigid as it should have been. Lieutenant Haight was a young and inexperienced officer, and as a consequence matters went rather loosely and caused old Sergeant Brown to shake his head grimly and confide to Van Allen that "he had dealt with these brown devils before, and that the Jentle was taking things altogether too easy."

"Then there may be trouble," hazarded Van Allen.

"Trouble?" grunted Brown. "Naw, not trouble, just plain, simple h—," and Van Allen's heart expanded and throbbed at the thought that at last he was to participate in a real engagement.

All that night he busied himself with last messages to dear ones at home, meantime humming plaintively that popular, pathetic "Just as the Sun Went Down." They always did this in novels, and at last he was to do something that would live in history, and be read by admiring people everywhere. And just before rolling in he sat down, and after much laborious thought constructed a dying verse to a certain blonde young lady who worked in R. H. Macy's dry goods emporium in Boston: "I place your picture 'neath my dark blue shirt, And, should to-morrow see me bite the dirt, Remember, dear, your face was next my heart."